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NRO REVIEW COMPLETED

19 SEP 1963

MEMORANDUM FOR: Deputy Director for Science and Technology

SUBJECT : Proposed NRO and JCS/JRC Agreement,
dated 11 September 1963

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1. The proposed agreement that is now before us is at least the third attempt by DOD to obtain our concurrence. Each rewrite, however, has failed to alter the primary intent of the agreement which we view as a maneuver by DOD to take over aircraft reconnaissance operations from CIA. In our opinion the proposal is:

A. Another "Trojan Horse" in disguise.

B. Fails to heed the McCone-Gilpatric agreement, which in effect stated that the agreement would confine itself to those aircraft operations conducted by the DOD in behalf of NRO activities and specifically exclude those operations conducted by CIA in behalf of the NRO.

2. Although the Pentagon may possess valid reasons for an agreement of this type, we cannot appreciate any need for such agreement other than to formalize in writing the notification procedures which are now in existence by the CIA and DOD regarding CIA conducted aircraft operations and to make some provision for the transfer from NRO of these aircraft assets during periods of war or tension. We observe this proposal suspiciously in view of Secretary Gilpatric's confession to Mr. McCone that there was a strong feeling expressed by General LeMay and apparently supported passively by General Taylor and Secretary McNamara that the time had come to move all reconnaissance operations from CIA to DOD.

3. Additionally, we must not forget the fact that Dr. McMillan (in his covering memorandum to Dr. Scoville which transmitted the original aircraft operations center proposal of 15 April) stated explicitly that he believed the proper organizational arrangements to be inadequate with respect to capability for operational planning and analysis. In addition, he wanted to insure that the NRO had available for overflight operations the best military operational knowledge and experience.

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This was a point, Dr. McMillan went on to say, on which the Chiefs expressed particular concern during his last discussion with them. It does not take too devious a mind to conclude that the proposed Aircraft Operations Center agreement was in fact prepared to carry out the Joint Chiefs' desires. We have also failed to question Dr. McMillan as to where he feels (or felt) present inadequacies exist. Does he feel that there is any talent in the Pentagon in the conduct of overflight operations which can match the record of the some 400 overflights CIA has conducted to date? Are there many in the Pentagon at this time who have actually participated in the planning and operation of overflight activities other than those of an overt nature over territories designated under the terms of Hot War? We are fearful that any agreement, even one such as 11 September, which is now before us for concurrence, will permit the "foot in the door" maneuver which if we can look to the experience of our Satellite and Eastman operations can only lead to the out-maneuvering of CIA in its operational jurisdiction over aircraft overflights.

4. Possibly before reacting to this proposed agreement, we might wish to explore with Dr. McMillan through Mr. McCone the reasons which prompted him to submit the original proposal and to ask him to identify the areas of inadequacies which he has found or experienced to date with Program B's activities and planning. If it is merely staff work that Dr. McMillan is seeking, then we submit that Program B is adequately prepared to satisfy his desires.

5. In any case we would wish to insure that the proposed agreement be modified to:

A. Permit the employment of the JRC to handle whatever planning and analysis the D/NRO may desire for those operations conducted operationally by DOD components.

B. Specify that the agreement does not alter the basic policy of handling reconnaissance over denied foreign territory which, except for Cuba [redacted] are now reserved for and carried out by the CIA.

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C. State that Program B will provide D/NRO necessary staff work regarding those aircraft operations [redacted] conducted by CIA.

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D. Codify the channels of notification which are now in existence between the CIA and DOD components regarding interchange of information on aircraft operations.

E. Include the provision, as proposed, relating to the transfer of NRO assets to the DOD "during periods of war, and tension".

F. Specify that the agreement in no way imposes another layer or chain of coordination between Program B and AFIGO-S in effecting logistical and other support of Program B operations received from DOD.

JACK C. LEDFORD
Colonel, USAF
Assistant Director
(Special Activities)

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19 Sept 63

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